

**MINUTES OF MEETING
BOARD OF BEHAVIORAL HEALTH AND DEVELOPMENTAL DISABILITIES
HELD
NOVEMBER 9, 2009**

BOARD MEMBERS PRESENT:

Mary D. Burns, M.D.
Donald Cole
Justin Neal
Deirdre O'Brien
Susan Radovich
Terry E. Langley
William McDonald, ex officio, Governor's Office

Board Members TO BE APPOINTED (3)

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Dr. Mary Burns called the meeting to order at 1:00 p.m. and welcomed everyone to the meeting of the Department of Behavioral Health and Developmental Disabilities (DBHDD).

The Minutes of the September 25, 2009 Meeting were unanimously approved with no corrections.

The final version of the Board of Behavioral Health and Developmental Disabilities Bylaws were presented and unanimously approved.

The Resolution which authorizes the Commissioner to take such action on behalf of the Board to approve the issues of the State of Georgia Obligation Bonds effective November 9, 2009 was unanimously approved.

Donald Cole was nominated Vice Chair of the Board and Deirdre O'Brien was nominated for Secretary of the Board and both nominations were unanimously approved.

Commissioner's Report:

Dr. Frank Shelp gave an update on the current settlement agreement with the Department of Justice (DOJ). The DOJ is conducting monitoring visits of all seven hospitals, with the most recent visit to Central State Hospital. Many of the same concerns are still ongoing at the facilities. Although the changes that have been accomplished with the forensic program used in the Cook Building at Central State Hospital are very positive. A number of experts have been contracted and will be at each of the seven facilities in teams of four to five people to begin effecting the guidance of change that each hospital needs. There will also be specialists in select areas giving advice and guidance. A number of the hospital staff will be training and mentoring a group of our internal

personnel and also be supplemented by a new information and management technology process. The Department needs to be in substantial compliance in the four areas of concern by January 15, 2010 and Dr. Shelp stated that "substantial compliance" will need to be defined more specifically prior to that date.

Dr. Shelp stated that the Department lacks boundaries in the areas of Addictive Disease, Developmental Disabilities and Mental Health and has looked at opportunities to partnership with strategic partners. On the 100th day of the new Department, a partnership with the Medical College of Georgia was made. This agreement is ongoing and progressive and will be supplementing the medical staff at the hospital with medical students, nursing students and various disciplines and this partnership will bring a higher standard of care. Other agreements with other medical schools are also being pursued.

The Budget for the coming fiscal year has been placed with the Governor's Office. After the Governor reviews all of the budgets submitted by each department, the budgets will be combined and presented to the Legislature for their first meeting in January. The Governor and the Office of Planning and Budget have the task of prioritizing what each department will receive based on the total projected resources for the state. Dr. Shelp stated that the Governor met personally with a group of Mental Health Advocates and other groups and has stated that although there will be cuts in various departments, he is committed to sparing this department from additional cuts. It will take a significant amount of money to come into compliance with the Settlement Agreement and this money is included in the supplemental request of 2010 as well as the 2011 budget. The department is already spending against the supplemental budget because timing is so critical.

Dr. Shelp noted that the Olmstead Agreement has an obligation for the transition of 150 individuals and a supplemental budget request by the department has been made in this area.

Dr. Shelp stated that we have four medical schools within a reasonable proximity to all of the hospitals. He stated that if we can form collaborations with these schools, we can mitigate our personnel needs. In addition, the medical schools have the ability to recruit psychiatrists. Currently the hospitals are depending largely on locum tenen physicians in order to meet the needs of the hospitals. After the announcement of the merger of East Central Regional Hospital with the Medical College of Georgia, there were inquiries from faculty psychiatrists along the east coast about the possibility of practicing at the hospital. This partnership is advantageous to both the medical schools and the hospitals because the hospitals offer an opportunity for training and career development and the medical schools bring the expertise to the hospitals.

Chair Report:


Dr. Mary Burns thanked Dr. Shelp for his report and commended both Dr. Shelp and Dr. William McDonald for getting the medical schools involved with the hospitals. Dr. Burns stated that there are three additional Board positions to fill and would like to have committees of the Board meet at 10:00am on the day of the Board meeting in January.

Public Comments:

The meeting was opened for public comments by Dr. Burns.

There were many comments from people concerned about the pay cuts to the Developmental Disabilities providers and also concerning the new waivers being so complicated and labor intensive. The need for home and community based services and the fear that the waivers and optional services will be impacted was also discussed. Dr. Burns stated to the group that she would like to hear any potential creative solutions and asked the people who were voicing their displeasure to email her with their possible solutions to the perceived problems. Mr. Donald Cole suggested that each Board member submit to Dr. Burns the names of three providers and then come up with a list of five and contact the five providers to get their opinion of the concerns raised at the meeting.

There being no further business, the meeting adjourned at 2:05 p.m.



Mary D. Burns, M.D., Chair

Deirdre O'Brien, Secretary

THE NEXT MEETING

The next meeting of the Board of Behavioral Health and Developmental Disabilities will be January 25, 2010.